

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 27 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 24 to 27 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 18 and 22 to 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,490,052 (Yanagidaira) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,515,756 (Mastie); Claims 19 to 21 and 25 to 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yanagidaira in view of Matsie and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,253,238 (Lauder). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Turning to specific claim language, independent Claim 1 is directed to a method for supporting printer maintenance in a network environment having a server, at least one network device and a printer, the server containing a plurality of printer configuration files. The method includes the steps of accessing one of the printer configuration files which corresponds to the printer, the configuration file including a plurality of printer maintenance function names and a plurality of printer maintenance commands corresponding to the printer maintenance function names, generating an HTML-based page corresponding to the printer, the HTML-based page containing each of the printer maintenance function names from the accessed printer configuration file, and sending the HTML-based page to the network device, wherein, upon selection in the network device of one of the printer maintenance function names in the HTML-based page,

the server sends to the printer the printer maintenance command which corresponds to the selected printer maintenance function name.

In contrast, Yanagidaira discloses detecting a “request of the specification or update of the setting of the printer which corresponds to the printer information database” by a control unit. Then, the control unit “records the setting required for the printer information database 6, [and] obtains other setting states and generates a necessary HTML file group.” (See Yanagidaira, Column 7, lines 21-32). Thus, Yanagidaira is seen to disclose a printer information database that stores operating and setting states for a printer. This printer information database is then coupled to a control unit that stores operating and setting states of a network printer. (Yanagidaira, Column 5, Lines 30 to 34). When setting information is changed via a client browser, the setting control unit performs recording of the requested setting for the printer information database. (Yanagidaira, Column 7, Lines 26 to 30).

The printer information database of Yanagidaira is not analogous to Applicant’s configuration file. The printer information database of Yanagidaira stores the state of a printer whereas Applicant’s configuration file includes a plurality of printer maintenance commands corresponding to a plurality of printer maintenance function names. Therefore, the system of Yanagidaira cannot be used to generate an HTML-based page corresponding to the printer with the HTML-based page containing each of the printer maintenance function names from an accessed printer configuration file because the printer information database does not include sufficient information to associate maintenance commands and corresponding maintenance function names.

Not only does Yanagidaira fail to disclose Applicant's configuration files, Yanagidaira is seen to teach away from issuing maintenance commands to a printer directly by a server using the configuration files. Yanagidaira teaches additional software modules between the web server unit and the printer that mediate the control that a server may have over a printer. Specifically, the web server unit of Yanagidaira instructs a printer indirectly through the use of a control unit and the printer information database. (Yanagidaira, Column 7, Lines 26 to 30; Figures 1 and 5). Therefore, the control unit embodies the logic necessary to instruct the printer and the printer information database embodies the state of the printer. The use of an intermediate control unit and printer information database is in direct contradiction to Applicant's claimed invention wherein, upon selection in the network device of one of the printer maintenance function names in the HTML-based page, the server sends to the printer the printer maintenance command which corresponds to the selected printer maintenance function name.

In addition, Yanagidaira teaches away from allowing a user to send a maintenance command to a printer via the server. In particular, Yanagidaira teaches that "the operating state of the printer is automatically settled when a preset, predetermined time elapses. Accordingly, because a user need not perform any update procedure on purpose, the workload of a user of the client machine can be reduced." (Yanagidaira, Column 3, Lines 63 to 67). Therefore, Yanagidaira teaches that a user should be completely isolated from issuing maintenance commands to a printer using a server.

In the Office Action, it is stated that Yanagidaira combined with Mastie suggests a configuration file including a plurality of printer maintenance function names

and a plurality of printer maintenance commands corresponding to the printer maintenance function names. However, Yanagidaira discloses only a printer information database on a printer server that stores operating state data (e.g., paper empty, paper jam or power off) and operation setting state data (e.g., operation mode, power-saving function, or setting of a paper feed or ejection destination) of each network printer. (Yanagidaira, Column 5, Lines 17 to 24). Mastie discloses a configuration file to determine a set of print attribute values. (Mastie, Column 2, Lines 63 to 64). Mastie defines print attribute values to mean any type of control factor that is used to affect the print transform process which generates an output data stream, including form definitions, page definitions, page segments, overlays and fonts. (Mastie, Column 2, Lines 15 to 41). Thus, the modification of Yanagidaira in view of Mastie does not disclose and does not suggest Applicant's configuration file including a plurality of printer maintenance function names and a plurality of printer maintenance commands corresponding to the printer maintenance function names.

In this regard, Lauder is not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Yanagidaira and Mastie. In particular, Lauder is seen to be directed to an interactive cable television system with the ability to capture a desired frame of video and then store the captured frame into memory. (Lauder, abstract; Fig. 14; and column 2, lines 1 to 42). Although Lauder is seen to disclose the use of an interactive cable television system, nowhere is Lauder seen to disclose or suggest supporting performance of maintenance on a printer by accessing the printer's configuration file, where the configuration file includes a

plurality of printer maintenance function names and a plurality of printer maintenance commands corresponding to the printer maintenance function names.

Based on the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the combination of features of independent Claim 1. Accordingly, independent Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance. In addition, independent Claim 24 contains at least substantially similar features as those described above, and is therefore also believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to independent Claim 1.

Claims 2 to 23 are dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 25 to 27 contain the features of Claims 1 to 24 and are therefore also believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as discussed above.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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